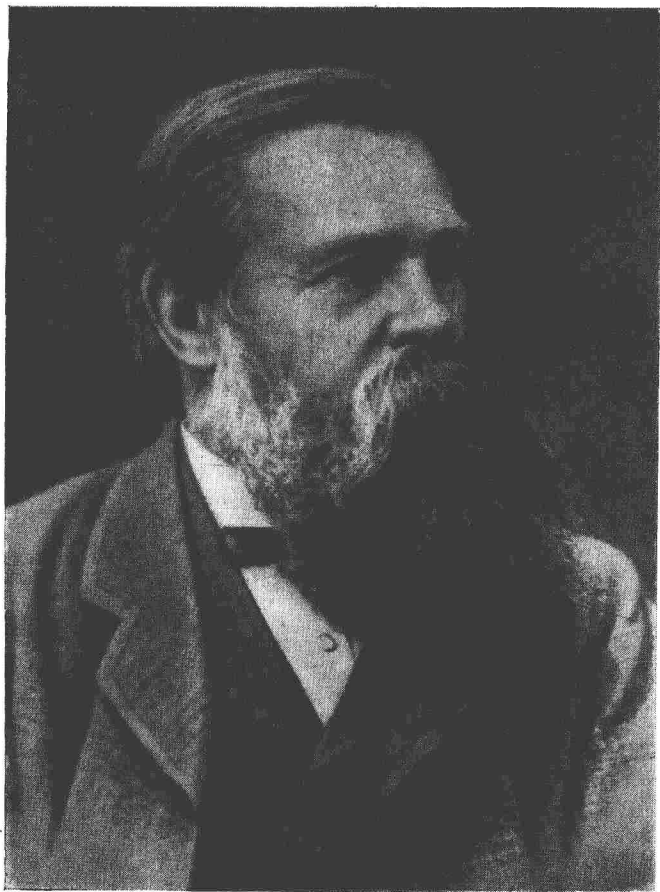


Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics



F. Engels

FREDERICK ENGELS

ANTI-DÜHRING

**HERR EUGEN DÜHRING'S
REVOLUTION IN SCIENCE**



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

M o s c o w 1 9 5 4

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This translation of Frederick Engels's *Anti-Dühring* has been made from the third German edition (1894).

Those parts of the book from which the author subsequently composed his pamphlet *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, namely: "Introduction," Chapter I, "General"; Part III, "Socialism," Chapter I, "Historical," and Chapter II, "Theoretical," are reproduced from the authorized English translation of the pamphlet. Words and passages in the pamphlet which were not included in the above-mentioned parts of *Anti-Dühring* are here given in square brackets. The most important formulations from the extant rough copy of the "Introduction" are given in footnotes, as are certain passages in the pamphlet which differ from the corresponding passages of the original German edition of *Anti-Dühring*.

The book is preceded by the author's prefaces to the first three German editions.

Appended to it are: the "Old Preface" afterwards assigned by Engels to the materials on the *Dialectics of Nature* then in preparation; selected excerpts from his preparatory writings for *Anti-Dühring*; the article "Infantry Tactics, Derived from Material Causes," and the "Notes" by Engels to *Anti-Dühring*.

The book is supplied with a subject and a name index.

Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I, is quoted from the Moscow English edition, 1954.

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PREFACES TO THE THREE EDITIONS

I

The following work is by no means the fruit of any "inner urge." On the contrary.

When three years ago Herr Dühring, as an adept and at the same time a reformer of socialism, suddenly issued his challenge to his century, friends in Germany repeatedly urged on me their desire that I should subject this new socialist theory to a critical examination in the central organ of the Social-Democratic Party, at that time the *Volksstaat*. They thought this absolutely necessary in order to prevent a new occasion for sectarian splitting and confusion from developing within the Party, which was still so young and had but just achieved definite unity. They were in a better position than I was to judge the situation in Germany, and I was therefore duty bound to accept their view. Moreover, it became apparent that the new convert was being welcomed by a section of the socialist press with a warmth which it is true was only extended to Herr Dühring's good will, but which at the same time also indicated that in this section of the Party press there existed the good will, precisely on account of Herr Dühring's good will, to take also, without examination, Herr Dühring's doctrine into the bargain. There were, besides, people who were already preparing to spread this doctrine in a popularized form among the workers. And finally Herr Dühring and his little sect were using all the arts of advertisement and intrigue to

force the *Volksstaat* to take a definite stand in relation to the new doctrine which had come forward with such mighty pretensions.

Nevertheless it was a year before I could make up my mind to neglect other work and get my teeth into this sour apple. It was the kind of apple that, once bitten into, had to be completely devoured; and it was not only very sour, but also very large. The new socialist theory was presented as the ultimate practical fruit of a new philosophical system. It was therefore necessary to examine it in its connection with this system, and in doing so to examine the system itself; it was necessary to follow Herr Dühring into that vast territory in which he dealt with all things under the sun and with some others as well. That was the origin of a series of articles which appeared in the Leipzig *Vorwärts*, the successor of the *Volksstaat*, from the beginning of 1877 onwards and are here presented as a connected whole.

It was thus the nature of the object itself which forced the criticism to go into such detail as is entirely out of proportion to the scientific content of this object, that is to say, of Dühring's writings. But there are also two other considerations which may excuse this length of treatment. On the one hand it gave me, in connection with the very diverse subjects to be touched on here, the opportunity of setting forth in a positive form my views on controversial issues which are today of quite general scientific or practical interest. This has been done in every single chapter, and although this work cannot in any way aim at presenting another system as an alternative to Herr Dühring's "system," yet it is to be hoped that the reader will not fail to observe the connection inherent in the various views which I have advanced. I have already had proof enough that in this respect my work has not been entirely fruitless.

On the other hand, the "system-creating" Herr Dühring is by no means an isolated phenomenon in contemporary Germany. For some time now in Germany systems of cosmogony, of natural philosophy in general, of politics, of economics, etc., have been springing up by the dozen overnight, like mushrooms. The most insignificant *doctor philosophiae* and even a student will not go in for anything less than a complete "system." Just as in the modern state it is presumed that every citizen is competent to pass judgment on all the issues on which he is called to vote; and just as in economics it is assumed that every consumer is a connoisseur of all the commodities which he has occasion to buy for his maintenance—so similar assumptions are now to be made in science. Freedom of science is taken to mean that people write on every subject which they have not studied, and put this forward as the only strictly scientific method. Herr Dühring, however, is one of the most characteristic types of this bumptious pseudo-science which in Germany nowadays is forcing its way to the front everywhere and is drowning everything with its resounding—sublime nonsense. Sublime nonsense in poetry; in philosophy, in politics, in economics, in historiography; sublime nonsense in the lecture-room and on the platform, sublime nonsense everywhere; sublime nonsense which lays claim to a superiority and depth of thought distinguishing it from the simple, commonplace nonsense of other nations; sublime nonsense, the most characteristic mass product of Germany's intellectual industry—cheap but bad—just like other German-made goods, only that unfortunately it was not exhibited along with them at Philadelphia. Even German socialism has lately, particularly since Herr Dühring's good example, gone in for a considerable amount of sublime nonsense, producing various persons who give themselves airs about "science," of which they

“really never learnt a word.” This is an infantile disease which marks, and is inseparable from, the incipient conversion of the German student to Social-Democracy, but which our workers with their remarkably healthy nature will undoubtedly overcome.

It was not my fault that I had to follow Herr Dühring into realms where at best I can only claim to be a dilettante. In such cases I have for the most part limited myself to putting forward the correct, undisputed facts in opposition to my adversary's false or distorted assertions. This applies to jurisprudence and in some instances also to natural science. In other cases it has been a question of general views connected with the theory of natural science—that is, a field where even the professional natural scientist is compelled to pass beyond his own speciality and encroach on neighbouring territory—territory on which he is, therefore, as Herr Virchow has admitted, just as much a “semi-initiate” as any one of us. I hope that in respect of minor inexactitudes and clumsiness of expression, I shall be granted the same indulgence as is shown to one another in this domain.

Just as I was completing this preface I received a publisher's notice, composed by Herr Dühring, of a new “authoritative” work of Herr Dühring's: *Neue Grundgesetze zur rationellen Physik und Chemie*.¹ Conscious as I am of the inadequacy of my knowledge of physics and chemistry, I nevertheless believe that I know my Herr Dühring, and therefore, without having seen the work itself, think that I am entitled to say in advance that the laws of physics and chemistry put forward in it will be worthy to take their place, by their erroneousess or platitudinousness, among the laws of economics, world schematism, etc., which were discovered earlier by Herr

¹ *New Basic Laws for Rational Physics and Chemistry.*—Ed.

Dühring and are examined in this book of mine; and also that the rhigometer, or instrument constructed by Herr Dühring for measuring extremely low temperatures, will serve as a measure not of temperatures either high or low, but simply and solely of the ignorant arrogance of Herr Dühring.

London, June 11, 1878

II

I had not expected that a new edition of this book would have to be published. The subject-matter of its criticism is now practically forgotten; the work itself was not only available to many thousands of readers in the form of a series of articles published in the *Leipzig Vorwärts* in the course of 1877 and 1878, but also appeared in its entirety as a separate book, of which a large edition was printed. How then can anyone still be interested in what I had to say about Herr Dühring years ago?

I think that I owe this in the first place to the fact that this book, as in general almost all my works that were still current at the time, was prohibited within the German Empire immediately after the Anti-Socialist Law was promulgated. To anyone whose brain has not been ossified by the hereditary bureaucratic prejudices of the countries of the Holy Alliance, the effect of his measure must have been self-evident: a doubled and trebled sale of the prohibited books, and the exposure of the impotence of the gentlemen in Berlin who issue prohibitions and are unable to enforce them. Indeed the kindness of the Imperial Government has brought me more new editions of my minor works than I could really cope with; I have had no time to make a proper revision of

the text, and in most cases have been obliged simply to allow it to be reprinted as it stood.

But there was also another factor. The "system" of Herr Dühring which is criticized in this book ranges over a very wide theoretical domain; and I was compelled to follow him wherever he went and to oppose my conceptions to his. As a result, my negative criticism became positive; the polemic was transformed into a more or less connected exposition of the dialectical method and of the communist world outlook fought for by Marx and myself—an exposition covering a fairly comprehensive range of subjects. After its first presentation to the world in Marx's *Poverty of Philosophy* and in the *Communist Manifesto*, this mode of outlook of ours, having passed through an incubation period of fully twenty years before the publication of *Capital*, has been more and more rapidly extending its influence among ever-widening circles, and now finds recognition and support far beyond the boundaries of Europe, in every country which contains on the one hand proletarians and on the other undaunted scientific theoreticians. It seems therefore that there is a public whose interest in the subject is great enough for them to take into the bargain the polemic against the Dühring tenets merely for the sake of the positive conceptions developed alongside this polemic, in spite of the fact that the latter has now largely lost its point.

I must note in passing that inasmuch as the mode of outlook expounded in this book was founded and developed in far greater measure by Marx, and only in an insignificant degree by myself, it was self-understood between us that this exposition of mine should not be issued without his knowledge. I read the whole manuscript to him before it was printed, and the tenth chapter of the part on economics ("From the *Critical History*") was

written by Marx, but unfortunately had to be shortened somewhat by me for purely external reasons. As a matter of fact, we had always been accustomed to help each other out in special subjects.

With the exception of one chapter, the present new edition is an unaltered reprint of the former edition. For one thing, I had no time for a thoroughgoing revision, although there was much in the presentation that I should have liked to alter. Besides I am under the obligation to prepare for the press the manuscripts which Marx has left, and this is much more important than anything else. Then again, my conscience rebels against making any alterations. The book is a polemic, and I think that I owe it to my adversary not to improve anything in my work when he is unable to improve his. I could only claim the right to make a rejoinder to Herr Dühring's reply. But I have not read, and will not read, unless there is some special reason to do so, what Herr Dühring has written concerning my attack; in point of theory I have finished with him. Besides, I must observe the rules of decency in literary warfare all the more strictly in his regard, because of the despicable injustice that has since been done to him by the University of Berlin. It is true that the University has not gone unpunished. A university which so abuses itself as to deprive Herr Dühring, in circumstances which are well known, of his academic freedom must not be surprised to find Herr Schweninger forced on it in circumstances which are equally well known.

The only chapter in which I have allowed myself some additional elucidation is the second of Part III, "Theoretical." This chapter deals simply and solely with the exposition of a pivotal point in the world outlook for which I stand, and my adversary cannot therefore complain if I attempt to state it in a more popular form